

WEDDING GUIDELINES

MAIN STREET UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

A wedding is one of the happiest and holiest moments in a couple's life. As two Christian people join their lives to establish a home, the church rejoices with them and is eager to help make the occasion beautiful and memorable. A wedding does not have to be elaborate in order to be beautiful. The true beauty lies in the spirit and attitude of those who take part – their sincerity and deep devotion.

In the excitement of planning for the wedding, many questions arise. The procedure which follows will serve as a guide toward making right decisions, and the pastors and staff will be glad to be of all possible help. This booklet is a statement of established policies, procedures and accommodations available for weddings at Main Street United Methodist Church, as approved by the Administrative Board on May 24, 2001, revised March, 2025. It is expected that these procedures be followed.

Setting the Date

The date for the wedding, rehearsal, and reception (if it is to be held at our church) should be set as soon as possible. Because of scheduled services and/or other functions of our church, some dates are not available for weddings. No weddings are scheduled during Holy Week, during the week of Annual Conference (usually the second week of June), or on Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day or New Year's Day. The Fellowship Hall is not available for receptions during the seasons of Advent and Christmas (Thanksgiving through January 6) or Holy Week.

It is recommended that the wedding date be set at least six (6) months in advance in order that premarital conferences may be scheduled with the officiating pastor; however, non-members' wedding may not be scheduled more than nine (9) months prior to the wedding. The wedding date for members, however, can not be confirmed more than eighteen months (18) prior to the event.

A pastor of Main Street United Methodist Church will assist you in arranging a suitable date and no date will be scheduled prior to a conversation with one of the pastors. When the date has been approved by one of the pastors, it will be placed on the master calendar in the church office.

A deposit of \$100.00, payable to Main Street United Methodist Church, shall be paid before a non-member wedding date can be confirmed. Members and non-members shall pay all fees no later than two (2) weeks before the rehearsal.

The Pastor

It is the policy of Main Street United Methodist Church for a pastor of this church to be in charge of all weddings. It is acceptable to have another pastor assist in the marriage ceremony, provided that a pastor of our church is consulted first. The invitation to another pastor must come from a pastor of Main Street United Methodist Church. It is the policy of our church that all weddings follow the ritual of the United Methodist Church. The pastor of Main Street United Methodist Church must approve any deviations from this ritual.

Premarital Conferences

All couples are required to participate in at least three (3) premarital conferences with the pastor officiating at their wedding. It shall be the responsibility of the couple to arrange for these conferences with the pastor.

The Church Hostess

As soon as the wedding date has been confirmed with the pastor and placed on the master calendar in the church office, the church shall provide the bride a list of approved wedding hostesses. A wedding hostess shall be present for any and all weddings taking place at Main Street United Methodist Church; unless the officiating pastor determines that a hostess is not needed. It shall be the responsibility of the bride to contact the Hostess/Director she selects and arrange a time for them to get together. (The Worship Ministry Group will approve the Wedding Hostesses.)

The responsibilities of the wedding hostess shall include meeting with the bride prior to the rehearsal to plan the rehearsal and the wedding, arranging for the building(s) to be opened and closed after the rehearsal and wedding, directing the rehearsal and wedding. If a rehearsal dinner and/or reception is to be held at the church, the wedding hostess shall also be involved in the planning of this event(s). In all cases, the decisions of the wedding hostess are final.

Music

Because the Christian wedding is a service of worship in God's presence, the music should reflect the sacredness of the occasion. Therefore, all music must be of a sacred nature. In addition to the traditional classical selections suitable for weddings, some lighter styles of contemporary Christian music are acceptable.

The Pastor & Music Director must approve all music. A church organist shall be contacted as soon as the wedding date has been confirmed with the officiating pastor. The organist at Main Street United Methodist Church will play whenever the organ is used, unless a guest organist is approved by the organist & Director of Music of Main Street United Methodist Church. If needed, consultation time with Main Street's organist will be arranged. Vocal or instrumental soloists not secured by Main Street United Methodist Church should contact the organist no later than one (1) month before the wedding to coordinate selection of music, key, etc. Soloists are expected to be prepared on arrival at the rehearsal. Contact Nancy Blakemore at 336-993-3411 or by email at Nancy@mainstreetumc.org.

The Rehearsal

Please schedule your rehearsal for the time when you know that all members of the wedding party will be present. Please notify your wedding party of the importance of their promptness. We request that the couple ask the wedding party to remember that the rehearsal is a preparation for worship.

The Fellowship Hall and Kitchen OR Commons and Warming Kitchen

If you plan to include a rehearsal dinner or a reception, the Fellowship Hall and Kitchen OR Commons and Warming Kitchen must be scheduled at the same time as the Sanctuary to ensure space availability. The Fellowship Hall OR Commons is available three (3) hours before the event. Due to the activities of the church, the Fellowship Hall OR Commons may not be available. If the Fellowship Hall OR Commons is not available due to the ministries of the church you may need to find an alternate location for you reception.

The kitchen and Fellowship Hall OR Commons and warming kitchen must be left as found – everything clean and back in place, including furniture or display items. The custodian's fee does not include washing and putting away dishes and removing and re-setting furniture.

Photographs, Videos and Recordings

Photographs and videos may be made before the ceremony in the Narthex and Sanctuary of the church. During the ceremony (beginning when the pastor says, “Friends, we are...” and ending with the benediction), **no pictures or videos may be taken by the wedding guests.** The photographer may take pictures and videos from the back of the balcony or back of the main floor during the ceremony, if they are taken with a “quiet” camera and **without flash**. Videos may also be taken from the choir loft during the ceremony, if the camera is discreetly hidden with greenery or other appropriate decorations. However, the video camera in the choir loft must be turned on before the ceremony begins, and no one is to operate the camera during the service. The wedding party may return to the Sanctuary after the ceremony if pictures are desired.

A Main Street United Methodist Church sound technician shall be present for the wedding ceremony, and rehearsal as needed, to operate the sound equipment in the Sanctuary. This person will be assigned by the church office.

Decorations

Our Sanctuary is a place of dignified beauty. It does not require “decorations” to make it suitable for a beautiful church service. The following procedures are thus given to preserve the proper atmosphere in the Sanctuary to safeguard the furnishings:

Two (2) bouquets of flowers may be placed in the urns on the stands of either side of the Lord’s Table. A floral arrangement may be placed on the Lord’s Table provided that it is no taller than 13 inches and longer than 36 inches and does not include bows. Additional candelabra, flowers or greenery may be placed within the chancel area, so long as it does not interfere with the ceremony or obscure the Lord’s Table and its furnishings.

The church’s altarware (candlesticks, cross and paraments) are not to be moved from the Lord’s Table or pulpit. The Lord’s Table, pulpit, baptismal font, and piano are not to be removed from the chancel area. They may be repositioned **only** with the pastor’s approval. No greenery or decorations may be used on the chancel rails, since they are an extension of our Lord’s Table. Temporary construction, risers, and platforms may not be used. All decorations must be self-supporting and free standing; therefore, no tacks, pins, nails, scotch tape or glue may be used to fasten decorations to furniture, walls, or building.

It is the responsibility of the person/florist decorating the church to protect furniture and floor from moisture and wax. It is to be understood by any florist or parties placing decorations in the Sanctuary or Chapel that they be held responsible for any damages resulting from those decorations and shall be expected to make payment to cover the cost of the repair of this damage. For protection purposes, all candles used must be dripless candles and a protective covering must be placed under the candelabras. Also, to prevent stains to carpet, flower girls are to scatter only silk flowers. All decorations must be removed from the building immediately after the wedding unless special permission is sought and granted to postpone removal and clearing until the following day. The building must be left in the condition in which it was found. If you wish your flowers to be used in the Sunday Worship Service, contact the church secretary well in advance of your wedding to see if that date is open on the flower calendar.

Candles may not be distributed to wedding guests.

Non-members

Main Street United Methodist Church exists to make disciples and invite all persons to experience the transforming love of Christ through participation in this community of faith. We are not in the “wedding business”, however, couples who are not members of Main Street United Methodist Church or do not have at least one parent who is a member of Main Street United Methodist Church may be married at the church provided they (a) attend worship at Main Street United Methodist Church on three occasions before the wedding, (b) observe the policies specified in this booklet, and (c) pay the non-members fees outlined in “fees for non members.”

Facilities

Main Street United Methodist Church has the Sanctuary available for weddings. An organ and piano are available in the Sanctuary. The Fellowship Hall OR Commons may be used for receptions if the church calendar permits. The seating capacities are as follows: Sanctuary, approximately 500 seated in pews; Fellowship Hall, approximately 100 seated at round tables; Commons, approximately 80 seated at round tables.

Other Guidelines:

Dressing Rooms may be provided for the Wedding party. The Wedding Hostess/Director will instruct you as to which rooms are available. These rooms will be available three (3) hours before the wedding and one (1) hour after the wedding. If the rooms are not left as found, an additional custodial charge will be incurred.

All caterers and florists must schedule their arrival times with the person who is serving as Hostess/Director for your wedding.

The Church assumes no responsibility for purses or other valuables left in the dressing room or parlor during the wedding ceremony.

Under no circumstances must any of the wedding party come to the rehearsal or the wedding under the influence of alcohol or other drugs. Any persons under the influence will be asked to leave. The pastor or the Hostess/Director has the authority to cancel the wedding when this is violated. **NO** alcoholic beverages, including champagne, are to be served on church property.

Main Street United Methodist Church is a smoke-free facility.

Bird seed is allowed only outside the building and then, only if the couple does not return to the Sanctuary for pictures. Rice is not permitted.

The bride and groom shall be responsible for the behavior of the wedding party and wedding guests. The officiating pastor may suspend a wedding service, if these policies are violated or if the behavior of the wedding party or guests is deemed to be inappropriate.

The Sanctuary will be available two (2) hours for rehearsal use. On the day of the wedding, the Sanctuary will be available three (3) hours prior to the wedding hour for decorating, and one (1) hour after the wedding for pictures and cleanup.

If the Fellowship Hall OR Commons is used for the Reception it will be available three (3) hours prior to the wedding hour for decorating, and three (3) hours after the wedding. If a rehearsal dinner or party is to be held in the Fellowship Hall OR Commons, this space, including the kitchen or warming kitchen, will be available three (3) hours before the rehearsal dinner/party, two (2) hours for the dinner/party, and two (2) hours after the dinner/party.

Fees for Non-Members

A flat fee of \$800.00 for use of the Sanctuary for a wedding is charged. This fee includes Sanctuary, hostess, sound tech, and custodian for rehearsal and wedding. This fee does not include the fees for the musicians (organist, pianist, and soloists). If the Fellowship Hall OR Commons is used for the reception, the fee increases to \$1,000.00. The Fellowship Hall OR Commons can be used for the rehearsal dinner for an additional fee of \$150.00 which includes the custodial fee.

A security deposit of an additional \$100.00 must be made at the time the wedding is scheduled. All other fees are due by check two (2) weeks prior to the wedding date. The security deposit will be refunded after the wedding, if all facilities are left in satisfactory condition.

Fees for Members

The Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall OR Commons are available to church members without charge. However personnel fees are required and must be paid by check (2) two weeks prior to the wedding date.

The Pastor shall be paid directly. Other fees should be paid by check to Main Street United Methodist Church.

Pastor (Honorarium)	\$200.00 suggested
Organist Fee	\$350.00*(Additional fees may be required if rehearsals are needed)
Sound Technician Fee	\$100.00 (Rehearsal and Wedding)
Hostess	\$150.00 (Consultation, Rehearsal and Wedding)
Custodian	\$50 (Sanctuary) \$50 (Fellowship Hall OR Commons)

Contacts for Various Duties

Wedding Hostesses:

Susan Furmage	996-5940
Beth Vaught	993-8508

Custodian:

To be arranged by the church

Sound Techs:

To be arranged by the church